

10/100 MBS NETWORK DEVICE**Abstract**

A scheme by which a network device may be made to locate data signals from a plurality of potential data sources in the context of a network environment having devices that employ autonegotiation over an autonegotiation period. The scheme involves switching an input port on the network device between the various potential data sources on a one-by-one basis. If an idle signal indicating no ensuing autonegotiation period is detected, the switching action is terminated and the input port assignment is maintained for as long as the link is detected. Thereafter, the device returns to the switching state. If an idle signal indicating an ensuing autonegotiation period is detected, the switching action is stopped for a period equal to or longer than the autonegotiation period. Thereafter, if an idle signal is detected, the input port assignment is maintained for as long as the link is detected.